



---

## CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

### Commission on Disability

---

## MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2012

Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

Candace Havens  
Director  
Planning & Development

Community Development  
Senior Planner

#### Members

Rob Caruso, Co-Chair  
Girard Plante, Co-Chair  
Jane Brown  
Lucie Chansky  
Jini Fairley  
Rosemary Larking  
John Lojek  
Barbara Lischinsky

1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459  
T 617/796-1120  
F 617/796-1142

[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)

#### Members Present:

Rob Caruso, Co-Chair  
Girard Plante, Co-Chair  
Lucie Chansky  
Jini Fairley  
Rosemary Larking (7:45)  
Jane Brown

#### Staff Present:

Nicole Tocci, Inspectional Services

#### City Hall Employees:

Alice Walkup, Senior Planner, Community Development  
Anne Marie Belrose, Manager, Community Development  
Clint Schuckel, Engineering Department

#### Guests:

Heather Plattin  
Gail Gerzof

#### Regrets:

Barbara Lischinsky  
John Lojek

#### Meeting:

Rob Caruso called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

#### 1. Minutes:

Minutes from the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were discussed and a few corrections that needed to be made were pointed out.

J. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes from the May. 14, 2012 meeting and J. Lojek seconded the motion.

## **2. CDBG Report:**

A. Walkup gave the CDBG Report. She shared that the Newton Corner Advisory Committee voted to fund an APS project at Centre and Centre at \$4,000, but that an additional \$2,500 was needed to complete the project.

The Commission discussed bids & maintenance of projects, a project cannot go out to bid until it is fully funded.

The Community Service Center project might end up being more than half of what was originally proposed and voted on.

The Commission voted in favor of utilizing \$2,500 in FY13 Funds to be determined to go towards this project, with the condition that any costs that exceed the budget for this project must be borne by the Newton Corner Advisory Committee.

## **3. The Ed Center playground:**

A. Walkup introduced Gail Gerzof to speak about the condition of the Ed Center playground.

Gail Gerzof gave a brief summary of The ED Center and the varying needs of the children enrolled. The Ed Center has approximately 3,450 attending and approximately 15 children per class.

A. Walkup explained the constrictions of how we can help. Pathways, benches and re-surfacing are some of the things that are within the limits.

Re-surfacing the playground would cost approximately \$26 - \$28 per SQ.

Commission members provided a variety of suggestions of funding for the project; including working with the Newton Public Schools grant writer, the Katie Lynch Foundation, and the Understanding Our Differences program.

Gail Gerzof says she will keep the Commission informed of the upcoming playground project.

## **4. War Memorial Lift, Apposition letter:**

Rob shared how he and Girard had expressed concern about the Newton Housing Partnership voting not to move funds for the lift. Anne Marie Belrose explained some of the challenges in that vote, as a quorum were not present after several members recused themselves. Another meeting will be taking place on Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup>, and this issue will be taken up then by the NHP.

## 5. APS Tones:

The Commission discussed selecting a standard set of tones to be utilized in newer Audible Pedestrian Signals throughout the City. Clint Schuckel, of Transportation Engineering and Heather Platt of the Carroll Center shared information about APS in the City.

There are 5 major APS providers that offer equipment. We use the leading American Manufacture, Polara Engineering. Polara is also used by Boston. Some other States that use them are California and Idaho.

L. Chansky asked if we use Polara for future installations what happens when another company becomes cheaper. Clint Schuckel response was if we back up our reasons to why we want Polara by writing up our specifications we should be able to prove that Polara is best for our needs being met.

Heather shared that speech is not best and that utilizing the vibration option on the button to let people know the signal is going off for people who are both blind and deaf is very helpful. There is a vibration on the pole at the NWH intersection going to towards Commonwealth Ave, Heather feels that this should be used for all future installations as well.

Clint Schuckel emphasizes on how he thinks there should be a verbal countdown, giving a certain amount of time to cross. The sound will get louder before going silent indicating that it is no longer okay to cross.

Polara offers the tone/buzzing/vibrating option to indicate where to push the button to be-able to walk. Polara also has the option of the verbal countdown in the button itself.

Commission members were supportive of having a verbal countdown if possible. The Commission members selected the Australian Walk for all stops and selected the Anvil Rapid sound if there are two directions.

## 6. Bigelow Middle School:

Commission members spoke about concerns at Bigelow Middle School regarding handicap parking and accessibility. Clint Schuckel reported that lines had been repainted and that signs had been put up, and that the access aisles meet minimum width requirements.

Members also discussed concerns about enforcement against violators who park in HP spaces without proper placards.

L. Chansky mentioned that the accessible door from the HP spaces are locked making them not accessible and of no use being the closest door from the HP space.

G. Plante wanted to emphasize the point that a lot of the problems at the Bigelow School can't be fixed by paint.

Mike Cronin from Public Buildings will be made aware of the issues at the Bigelow School.

## **7. New/Old Business:**

Commission members spoke about a variance request related to dorms and housing, which has not yet been received by the City, and will be under consideration at a future date.

A. Walkup presented the Commission with a certificate for a job recognized and a job well done!!!

## **8. Adjourn**

R. Caruso made a motion that the meeting be adjourned and J. Brown seconded the motion.